

Volume 10, Issue 1

Spring 2010



SKYWARN

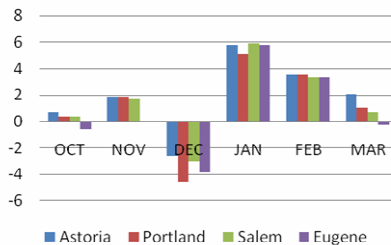
NATIONAL WEATHER SERVICE - PORTLAND, OREGON

Weather Spotlight

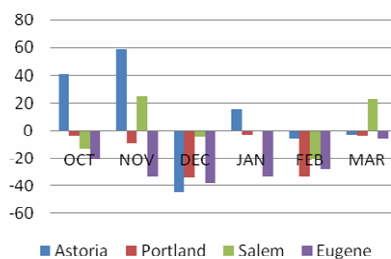
The Pacific NW Spotter Newsletter

Winter 2009-2010 Recap: A Climate Perspective

Departure from Normal
Average Temperatures



Departure from Normal
Precipitation (%)



The winter of 2009-10 was a tale of El Niño effects across the Pacific Northwest. The autumn was mild, with many locations across the region experiencing normal temperatures and with near normal precipitation.

As December arrived, so did one of the coldest air masses to visit the region in some time. Weather patterns over the North America highlighted continued cold air diving into the Plains states from Canada. This cold air was also pushing westward into the Rockies, and eventually into the Columbia Basin. With storms moving into California, overall airflow across the Pacific Northwest became increasingly offshore, allowing the cold air in the Columbia Basin to work its way west of the Cascades. The coldest air arrived on the 6th and 7th of December, with highs struggling to reach freezing at nearly all locations, except along the immediate coast where highs did reach into the middle 30s. With lack of clouds, overnight temperatures plummeted into the teens and lower

20s, even on the coast. For Portland, this cold snap resulted in the earliest cold snap since 1972. Fortunately this cold snap ended by the 13th, as a Pacific front spread rain and milder air back to the region. However, a round of snow came to the region on the 29th of December, leaving nearly everyone in the interior lowlands with at least 1 inch, but some areas around Portland to Forest Grove received the jackpot of nearly 8 to 10 inches. Overall, December ranked in the top 5 of the coldest Decembers on record for many locations.

The remainder of December through February was more tranquil, with milder temperatures and below normal precipitation. In fact, January ended as one the warmer months on record for many areas. In Portland, January 2010 was only the second time since 1940 that temperatures never fell to freezing or colder (2006 was the other year). As March came to a close, the region experienced a period of strong, wet Pacific storms, with heavy snow piling up in the Cascades.

Article submitted by: Clinton Rockey, Meteorologist, NWS Portland

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TRIVIA CORNER

What is the longest tornado path on record?

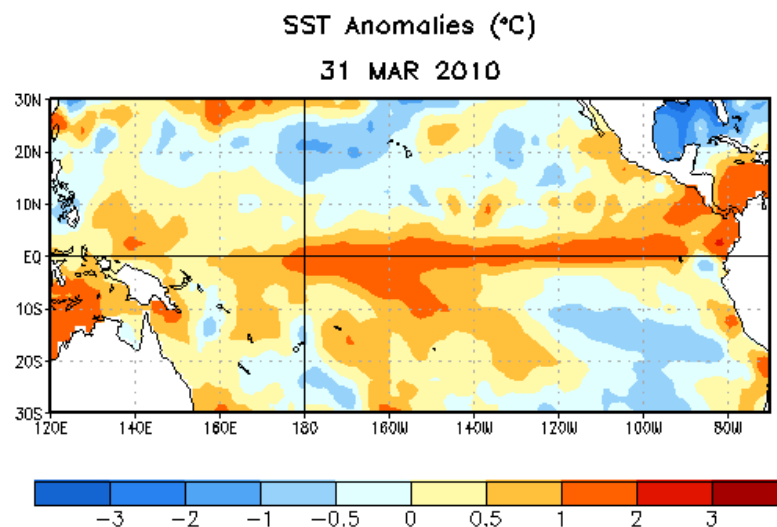
(answer on page 4)

El-Nino Update:

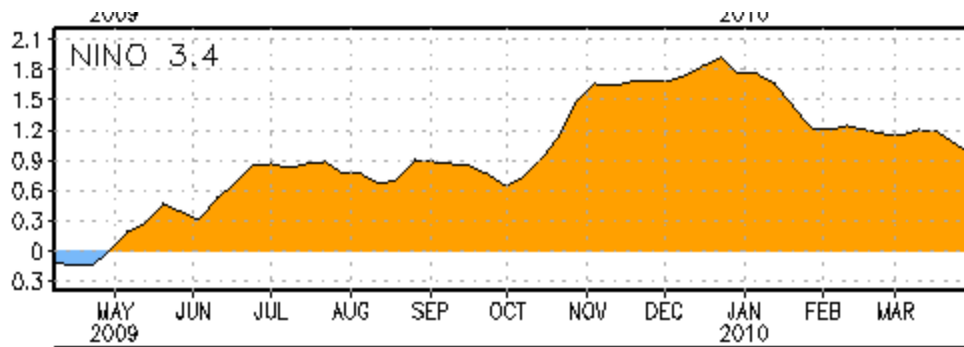
Are we still in an El-Nino?



El Niño weakened slightly during the last couple of months, but is still classified as moderate strength with sea surface temperature (SST) anomalies still exceeding $+1^{\circ}\text{C}$ across much of the central and eastern equatorial Pacific Ocean as of March 31, 2010.



The majority of the climate models predict the 3-month SST anomaly will drop below $+0.5^{\circ}\text{C}$ in the Niño 3.4 region by July 2010, indicating a transition to ENSO-neutral conditions that will likely persist through the summer. A couple of model solutions indicate below average sea surface temperatures in the Niño 3.4 region by this fall, which indicate a transition to La Niña conditions. However, the majority of the models continue to indicate the persistence of ENSO-neutral conditions will last through 2010.

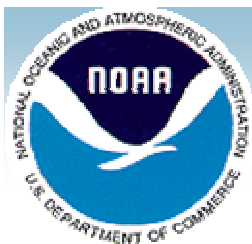


For the Pacific Northwest, the on-going El-Niño conditions will likely result in above normal temperatures through June 2010. The precipitation forecast is much less certain, with equal chances of being normal, below normal or above normal.

More information on El-Niño can be found on NOAA's Climate Prediction Website at:

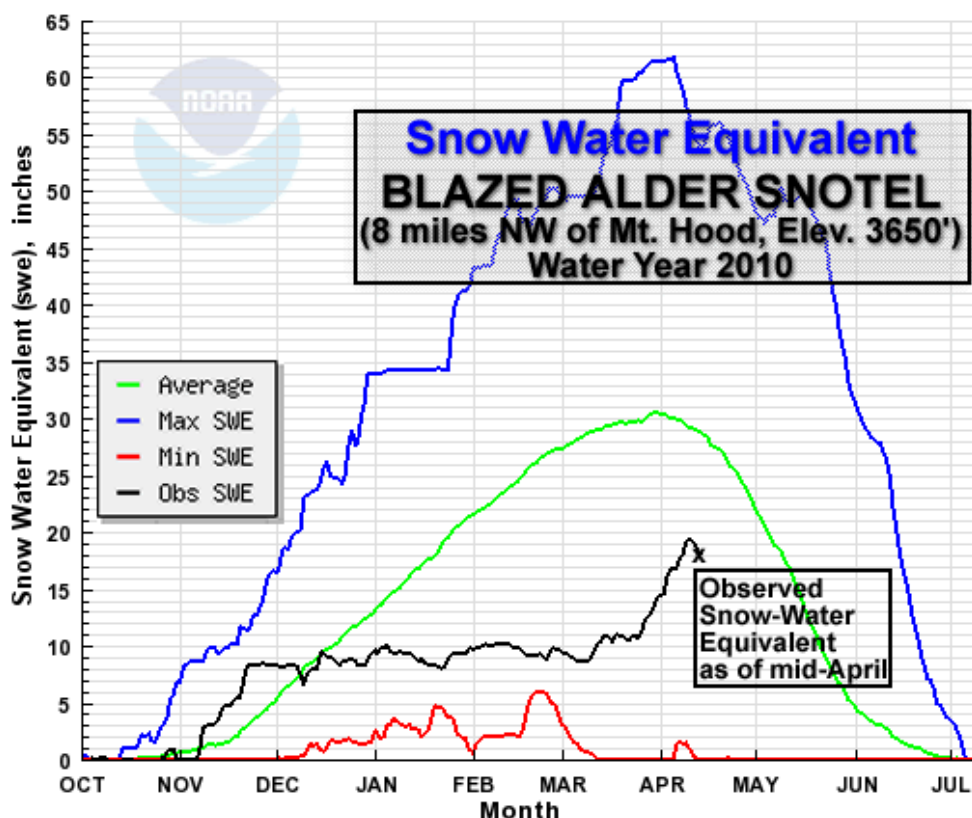
http://www.cpc.noaa.gov/products/analysis_monitoring/enso_advisory/index.shtml

Article submitted by: Tyree Wilde, Warning Coordination Meteorologist, NWS Portland



Recent Storms Boost Summer Water Supply

It seems this year that the strongest storms of the winter came after winter was over!



Throughout much of December, January, February, and March, the jet stream delivered most of the storm energy to California and the Southwest, a typical El Nino pattern. However, spring brought a northerly transition of the jet stream, with a series of vigorous storms bringing high winds, heavy mountain snow, and periods of heavy rain and intense showers to the valley locations. The storms increased the mountain snowpack by 20 to 30 percent. In late March the snowpack in the Willamette Basin was less than 40 percent of normal. After the first week of April, the snowpack was about 70 percent of normal - still well below typical conditions for this time of year but definitely a significant increase.

Water storage levels in several of the large Corps of Engineers reservoirs in the Cascade foothills also jumped significantly. For instance, Detroit Reservoir increased about 30 feet in the 2-week period of late March and early April, with similar rises for Cougar, Green Peter, and Hills Creek. It still appears that some of the reservoirs will not fill to their normal summer "full-pool" elevations.

Other parts of Oregon and Washington have experienced similar increases in snowpack and reservoir storage. However, most areas are still likely to see below-normal seasonal water supply, and restrictions are likely for some irrigators come summer. For more details about current conditions and the water supply forecast, visit www.wrh.noaa.gov/pqr/water_supply/water_supply.php.

Article submitted by: Andy Bryant, Service Hydrologist, NWS Portland

Joining the Social Media Realm...

The National Weather Service can be found all over the web!



Find us on Facebook!

Take a look at our Facebook page and become a fan of the US National Weather Service.

You can follow significant weather events across the country as well as some of the day to day activities occurring in the NWS. Want to learn more about El Nino and La Nina?... You can find this information, too. You can also share your favorite weather photos from your neck of the woods with other weather enthusiasts.

You can find us on Facebook at:

<http://www.facebook.com/US.National.Weather.Service.gov>

TRIVIA CORNER

The Great Tri-State tornado was reported to have traveled 215 miles across portions of Missouri, Illinois, and Indiana on March 18th, 1925.

*Source: The Handy Weather Answer Book,
by Walter A. Lyons, PH.D.—1997*



Report weather to us using Twitter!

Would you like to share your weather data with the world?

Everyone talks about the weather. Now's your chance to "tweet" it and be heard—and the Storm Reports via Twitter project is the best way to do just that. This project is just beginning to gain ground, and is in the experimental phase. Anyone with a Twitter account can participate. Your significant weather observations would be appreciated.

► To submit reports from your mobile device (*or where Geotagging is enabled*):

#wxreport *your significant weather report*

► To submit reports from your computer (*or where Geotagging is NOT enabled*):

#wxreport WW *your location* **WW** *your significant weather report*

For more information on the Storm Reports via Twitter project, please visit:

<http://www.weather.gov/StormReports>

To learn more about Twitter, or to sign up for a free account, please visit:

<http://twitter.com/>

****NOTE:** It is important that any severe weather reports also be submitted directly to our office by calling the toll-free phone line or through eSpotter (see following page).



iNWS: Bringing the Weather to YOU!

Interactive NWS (iNWS) is a new mobile and desktop innovation of the National Weather Service. iNWS strives to fulfill the National Weather Service's mission of protecting life and property by using new technology to reach out to our customers.

Would you like to be instantly notified by email or text message when the National Weather Service issues a Watch, Warning, or Advisory that may affect you? Would you like to browse radar and satellite imagery, observations, and point forecasts all from a simple map interface on your mobile device? Then iNWS is for you!

Here are the services currently being offered:

- A** iNWS Alerts *user customizable sms and e-mail alerts*
- H** AHPS Mobile *mobile hydrograph and alerting system*
- M** iNWS Mobile *nws blackberry/java cell phone application*
- C** iCWSU *aviation weather mobile web page*
- W** iNWS Mobile Web *nws mobile weather website*

For more information, and to register for this experimental service, please visit:

<http://inws.wrh.noaa.gov/>

DID YOU KNOW....?

Statistically, one day has been quite preferred over all others for planning a picnic in Salem.

In the entire history of officially recorded weather data for the Salem area (since 1892), it has only measurably rained twice on **July 12th** — once in 2006 with 0.06" rainfall, and again in 2009 with 0.68" rainfall.

In all other years, no rain or only a trace were reported.

Have you tried eSpotter?

eSpotter is a web-based spotter form available 24/7, all year round. Current spotters can register online and must be approved to use the system. It is available to any spotter who has taken a Spotter Training Class in the last three years, and names are purged from the system after three years if a refresher class is not taken. Once you are registered, you may submit a spotter report via the online system, and your report will instantly alarm on our computer system. To help us recognize you, please include your spotter number somewhere in your report.

For more information, and to register for eSpotter, please visit:

<http://espotter.weather.gov>

eSpotter



Online Weather Reporting System

**We also appreciate
old-fashioned
phone calls!**

X-XXX-XXX-XXXX

(unlisted number—
do not give out)

Spring Spotter Training Sessions

If you are interested in brushing up on your weather spotter training, or would like to introduce a friend to the Skywarn Spotter program, please plan to attend one of the following classes:*



Tuesday, April 20th

Vancouver, WA @ 7 pm

NW Regional Training Center

11606 NE 66th Circle

Vancouver, WA 98662

~~ In the St. Helens Room

Monday, April 26th

Parkdale, OR @ 7 pm

Parkdale Fire Station

4895 Baseline Drive

Parkdale, OR 97047

Wednesday, April 28th

Stayton, OR @ 7 pm

Stayton Fire Station

1988 W. Ida Street

Stayton, OR 97383

Tuesday, May 4th

Oakridge, OR @ 7 pm

Oakridge Fire Station

47592 Hwy 58

Oakridge, OR 97463

Wednesday, May 12th

Florence, OR @ 7 pm

Florence Fire Station

2625 Hwy 101

Florence, OR 97439

Tuesday, May 18th

Dallas, OR @ 7 pm

Dallas Fire Station

915 SE Shelton Street

Dallas, OR 97338

**Training sessions usually last no longer than 8:30 pm.*

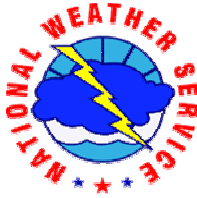
We would love to see you there!

.....FUN WEATHER FACTS.....

If a lightning flash takes only a fraction of a second, why does thunder last so long?

While we see the flash virtually instantaneously, the beginning and end points of lightning might be five or more miles apart. Due to the fact that sound travels more slowly than light, it takes more time for the shock wave to reach our ears.

Source: The Handy Weather Answer Book, by Walter A. Lyons, PH.D.—1997



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Visit Us Online!

www.weather.gov/portland

Severe Weather Awareness Week

Pacific Northwest — *May 2nd - 8th*

This is an excellent time for all individuals, families, businesses, schools, radio and television stations to review their spring and summer preparedness plans. Visit <http://www.wrh.noaa.gov/pqr/severeawareweek.php> for more information.

Spring in the Pacific Northwest can bring snow one day, then thunderstorms the next. The chance of severe thunderstorms will be increasing through the next several weeks. ***Are you prepared for severe weather to hit your neck of the woods?*** Severe Weather Awareness Week is the time to learn more about severe weather, develop severe weather preparedness plans, and test vital communications.

Topics to look forward to include:

Sunday, May 2nd— Introduction

Monday, May 3rd—Flood and Flash Flood Safety

Tuesday, May 4th—Tornadoes and Tornado Safety

Wednesday, May 5th—Wind, Hail, and Lightning Safety

Thursday, May 6th—Wildfires

Friday, May 7th—NWS Watch and Warning Program

Saturday, May 8th—NOAA Weather Radio

